

APPENDIX A

Claims on Appeal

2 3. The method of claim 17, in which performing step c1 is subordinate to a time delay elapsing since the preceding operation of putting the flag into the non-ratified state.

3 4. The method of claim 17, in which performing step c1 is subordinate to the machine performing the current transaction belonging to a group to which the machine that performed the preceding transaction also belongs.

4 5. The method of claim 17, in which, when the flag is in the non-ratified state, delivery without debit is inhibited if the machine detects that delivery took place during the preceding use of the object.

5 7. The method of claim 17, in which at least a portion of the information modifying the state of the object, in particular commands enabling the flag to be put into the ratified state, is previously processed by cryptographic means implemented both in the object and in the machine.

6 8. The method according to claim 17, in which

at least a portion of the information relating to the state of the object, in particular the state of the flag and confirmation that the debit has taken into account, is previously processed by cryptographic means implemented both in the object and in the machine.

7 9. The method of claim 17, in which the goods or service is delivered in deferred manner after a given time delay.

8 10. The method of claim 9, in which delivery takes place prior to the expiry of the time delay in the event of receiving confirmation that the object has been successful in putting the flag into the ratified state.

9 11. The method of claim 9, in which a pause of random duration is included in the transaction.

10 12. The method of claim 17, in which the information interchanged between the machine and the object is enciphered in such a manner as to avoid revealing the moment at which the machine instructs the object to put the flag into the ratified state, or the moment at which the object performs that instruction.

11 13. The method of claim 17, including, in the machine, counting the number of occasions on which it reads a flag in the non-ratified state.

12 14. The method of claim 17, including the object counting the number of occasions on which it stores the flag in the non-ratified state between two transactions.

13 15. The method of claim 13, in which means are provided to indicate that a given threshold has been exceeded by the count in the object, in particular means for inhibiting subsequent delivery of goods or service.

14 16. The method of claim 17, in which the object memory includes information about the kind of goods or service to be delivered, which information is updated before any delivery of said goods or service.

1 17. A method of interchanging data between the non-volatile memory of a portable object and an automatic machine with which the portable object is temporarily coupled to enable goods or service to be delivered, the portable object storing in said non-volatile memory value information that can be debited by the machine in consideration for delivering the goods or service, and a ratification flag

having two states, a ratified state and a non-ratified state, wherein the method comprises the successive following steps:

a) the machine reads the state of the flag and jumps to step e) if said flag is in the non-ratified state;

b) the machine issues to the portable object a command for debiting said value information by an amount corresponding to the goods or service to be delivered;

c) the portable object:

c1) records the debit by updating the value information, and

c2) puts the flag into the non-ratified state,

said sub-steps of recording the debit and putting the flag into the non-ratified state being performed in indivisible manner;

d) the portable object issues to the machine an acknowledgement signal indicating that the debit has been recorded;

e) the machine delivers the goods or service;

f) the machine issues to the portable object a command for setting the flag to the ratified state; and

g) the portable object puts the flag into the ratified state.--